

ADMINISTRATIVE ADJUSTMENT OF STANDARDS

TO: City of Issaquah

FROM: Kim Young
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SUBJECT: **Administrative Adjustment of Standards**
Middle School No 6
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Administrative Adjustment of Standards to Issaquah Municipal Code section 18.19C210 Site Walls

- A. Purpose and Intent. Site walls may be necessary or desirable even on flat sites. Where they are used they must be factored into creating a public realm that is pedestrian friendly and engaging, through material selection, placement, height, etc. Some wall styles are appropriate in or adjacent to natural open space, while other styles are suited to the built environment. Where walls are necessary or desirable, use walls that contribute to the selected architectural style and positively add to the public realm.
- B. Standards:
 1. Site walls adjacent to pedestrian areas (e.g., walkways, sidewalks, trails) shall be no taller than four (4) feet in height. If taller walls are required, e.g., as a retaining wall, two (2) choices are available:
 - a. Up to four (4) foot tall wall next to or near the pedestrian area, with taller walls (up to ten (10) feet in height) terraced the lower wall.
 - b. Up to ten (10) foot tall wall set back from the pedestrian area with enough setback to accommodate evergreen trees spaced every thirty (30) to thirty-five (35) feet. Additional walls may be terraced behind the first wall. Setback must accommodate mature tree size without impinging on pedestrian area. Setback space between trees will be filled with shrubs and ground covers consistent with CIDD standards.
 - c. In all cases of terracing, walls shall be terraced with enough space between walls to comfortably accommodate shrubs, vines, and ground cover, and, if the wall design accommodates it, trees, to soften the visual impact of the walls and blend them into their setting.
 2. Wall materials shall complement the selected architectural styles, such as block or shotcrete soil nail walls. Wall material shall not distract from the overall composition and the selected architectural style.

Due to previously graded slopes and the desire to locate the building on the more level portion of the site adjacent to Talus Drive, site walls are necessary to create a vibrant public realm that is pedestrian friendly and engaging, as well as meet the programming needs of a compact middle school. To achieve this, site walls greater than 4' adjacent to pedestrian areas and greater than 10' set back from pedestrian areas are required. An Administrative Adjustment of Standards is

requested to IMC 18.19C201 to allow taller site walls in the proposed development at Parcel 17B in the Talus Community. Below is a list of site wall conditions that require an administrative adjustment of standards and how the proposal intends to meet the intent of the site wall standards.

- 1) **Wall 1** From the bus lane to the automobile drive aisle, terraced soil-nail shoring walls with a sculpted shotcrete finish are proposed to step from 10' to 20' as the grade slopes down to the south. These walls are not adjacent to pedestrian areas but will be taller than 10'. They will be screened with vines, shrubs and ground cover as well as obstructed from view by the middle school building.
 - a. **Vision:** The proposed walls will meet the intent of section 18.19C.210 of the Talus Replacement Regulation by not being located adjacent to pedestrian areas and being screened with vines, shrubs and ground cover
 - b. **Access:** The proposed walls are not abutting properties or right-of-ways, dedicated tracts, or easements, but located within the site screened from view to adjacent properties
 - c. **Compatibility:** The proposed walls will be articulated like the walls on SR-900 at the base of Talus Drive (see image 19 on A-902) and other site walls within the Talus Community (see images 7 & 9 on A-902)
 - d. **Intent:** The proposed walls will meet the intent of section 18.19C.210 of the Talus Replacement Regulation by not being located adjacent to pedestrian areas and being screened with vines, shrubs and ground cover
 - e. **Safety:** The proposed walls will increase safety on the site by separating school bus traffic and automobile traffic, allowing students to access the school from the bus drop-off by a proposed pedestrian bridge.
 - f. **Service:** The proposed walls will provide greater site access for public services by allowing vehicles to reach all sides of the building and southern portion of the site
- 2) **Wall 2** From the automobile loop to the track/field, soil-nailed or laid-back concrete walls with decorative form liner are proposed. There is a 34' grade change from the field to the drop-off/pick-up drive. The grade change from the field to the parking area is 24'. To provide pedestrian access to the field from the drive and parking area, ramps and stairs will be incorporated into the retaining walls as well as a bleacher area which will reduce the scale of the walls. Due to the proximity of the wall to the middle school building a more structured wall is proposed to relate the architectural style of the building.
 - a. **Vision:** The proposed walls will meet the intent of section 18.19C.210 of the Talus Replacement Regulation by being matching the architectural style of the proposed building. It will also positively add to the public realm by providing an accessible ramp to the track/field and access to the field seating, while separating the ramp/seating from the field activities.
 - b. **Access:** The proposed walls are not abutting properties or right-of-ways, dedicated tracts, or easements, but located within the site screened from view to adjacent properties
 - c. **Compatibility:** The proposed walls will be similar in height to existing walls in the Talus Community and provide a character like the walls at the pocket park within Talus. (See image 6 on A-902)
 - d. **Intent:** The proposed walls will meet the intent of section 18.19C.210 of the Talus Replacement Regulation by being matching the architectural style of the proposed building. It will also positively add to the public realm by providing an accessible ramp to the track/field and access to the field seating, while separating the ramp/seating from the field activities.
 - e. **Safety:** The proposed wall will add safety features to the project by providing an accessible ramp to the track/field and access to the field seating, while separating the ramp/seating from the field activities.
 - f. **Service:** The proposed walls will provide greater site access for public services by allowing vehicles to reach all sides of the building and southern portion of the site

- 3) **Wall 3** At the south end of the bus loop it is proposed that planted MSE walls be used to achieve the grade change between the bus lane and visitor parking as well as the community trail to the south. Wall heights range from 10' to 20'. The MSE wall will allow the site to slope between the drive loops to the trail with vegetated walls.
- a. **Vision:** The proposed walls will meet the intent of section 18.19C.210 of the Talus Replacement Regulation by providing a planted wall adjacent to natural open spaces.
 - b. **Access:** The proposed walls are not abutting properties or right-of-ways, dedicated tracts, or easements, but located within the site screened from view to adjacent properties
 - c. **Compatibility:** The proposed walls will be similar in height to existing site walls adjacent to the trail system in the Talus Community with a larger landscape buffer and a planted wall. (See images 2 and 15 on A-902)
 - d. **Intent:** The proposed walls will meet the intent of section 18.19C.210 of the Talus Replacement Regulation by providing a planted wall adjacent to natural open spaces
 - e. **Safety:** The proposed walls allows for a sloped planted wall which provides a larger site area for the proposed trail stair
 - f. **Service:** The proposed walls will provide greater site access for public services by allowing vehicles to reach all sides of the building and southern portion of the site
- 4) **Wall 4** At the south end of the field, the grade change varies from 0' to 15'. Between the field wall and the property line to the south, a community trail is proposed. A concrete cast-in-place wall is proposed for the field wall due to site limitations.
- a. **Vision:** The proposed walls will meet the intent of section 18.19C.210 of the Talus Replacement Regulation by being screened with vines and shrubs at the area in front of the wall. The area around the trail will also be landscaped to reduce the scale of the wall.
 - b. **Access:** The proposed wall retains the track/field back from the adjacent property to the south allowing the preservation of existing trees and provide a neighborhood trail access along the property line
 - c. **Compatibility:** Several site walls in the Talus Community provide limited landscape buffer to the existing trail system. (see images 14 and 15 on A-902) This proposal provides a 3'-6" (at a min) landscape buffer to the wall which will be screened with vines.
 - d. **Intent:** The proposed walls will meet the intent of section 18.19C.210 of the Talus Replacement Regulation by being screened with vines and shrubs at the area in front of the wall. The around the trail will also be landscaped to reduce the scale of the wall.
 - e. **Safety:** The proposed wall retains the track/field back from the adjacent property to the south allowing the preservation of existing trees and provide a neighborhood trail access along the property line
 - f. **Service:** The proposed walls will provide greater site access for public services by allowing vehicles to reach all sides of the building and southern portion of the site